

In the Claims:

Please cancel claim 6, and replace claims 3, 4, 21, 24, 29, and 32-34, all as shown below.

Claims 1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended): A unitary spring system end cap for supporting an article, comprising:  
a platform portion adapted to support at least a portion of the article, the platform being generally arranged in a first plane; and  
a sidewall structure including:  
an inner wall connected with said platform portion, an outer wall forming an acute angle relative to a second plane perpendicular to said first plane, a spring system connected between said inner wall and said outer wall, and  
a rib protruding from said outer wall a distance that varies along a gap between the second plane and the outer wall such that a contact surface of the rib is generally parallel to the second plane and generally perpendicular to the first plane; and  
wherein the spring system is operably connected with the rib; and  
~~wherein a contact surface of the rib is formed generally parallel to the second plane.~~

4. (Currently Amended): The unitary spring system end cap as recited in claim 3, wherein when the ~~at least one~~ rib is impacted, the ~~at least one~~ rib can engage the ~~at least one~~ spring system.

5. (Previously Amended): The unitary spring system end cap as recited in claim 3, wherein said sidewall structure includes a plurality of said spring systems formed end to end, wherein each spring system is connected with said outer wall along a ridge forming a plurality of arcs connected end to end along the length of said sidewall structure.

6. (Canceled)

Claims 7-14. (Canceled)

15. (Withdrawn): A unitary spring system end cap for supporting an article, comprising:

a platform portion adapted to support at least a portion of the article;

at least one bulbous indentation formed in said platform portion; and a sidewall structure having a length and including: an inner wall connected with said platform portion, an outer wall forming an acute angle relative to said platform portion, and at least one spring system connected between said inner wall and said outer wall, said spring system including at least one bellows.

16. (Withdrawn): The unitary spring system end cap as recited in claim 15, wherein when said platform portion is impacted the at least one bulbous feature is adapted to collapse.

17. (Withdrawn): The unitary spring system end cap as recited in claim 16, comprising two bulbous features formed such that each of the bulbous features are centered along a minor axis of the platform portion and symmetrically spaced about a center of the platform portion along a major axis of the platform portion.

18. (Withdrawn): The unitary spring system end cap as recited in claim 16, wherein each of the bulbous features is formed such that the platform collapses away from a fragile portion of the article.

19. (Withdrawn): A unitary spring system end cap for supporting an article, comprising:  
a platform portion adapted to support at least a portion of the article;  
at least one bulbous indentation formed in said platform portion; and a sidewall structure including: an inner wall connected with said platform portion, an outer wall forming an acute angle relative to said platform portion, at least one spring system connected between said inner wall and said outer wall, said spring system including at least one bellows, and  
at least one rib protruding from said outer wall.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended): A system for supporting an article, comprising:  
a first end cap including:  
a first platform portion adapted to support a first portion of the article, the first platform being generally arranged in a first plane;  
a sidewall structure having:  
a first inner wall connected with said first platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said first platform portion;

a first outer wall forming an acute angle relative to an axis perpendicular to said first plane and surrounding the periphery of said first inner wall;

at least one first spring system connected between said first inner wall and said first outer wall, each of said at least one first spring system including at least one bellow bellows; and

at least one first rib protruding from said first outer wall; and

a second end cap including:

a second platform portion adapted to support a second portion of the article, the second platform being generally arranged in a second plane;

a sidewall structure having:

a second inner wall connected with said second platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said second platform portion;

a second outer wall forming an acute angle relative to an axis perpendicular to said second plane and surrounding the periphery of said second inner wall;

at least one second spring system connected between said second inner wall and said second outer wall, each of said at least one second spring system including at least one bellow bellows; and

at least one second rib protruding from said second outer wall; and

wherein the at least one first rib and the at least one second rib have a face substantially perpendicular to one of the first and second planes.

22. (Withdrawn): The system of claim 20, further comprising:

at least one first bulbous structure formed on the first platform portion; and

at least one second bulbous structure formed on the second platform portion.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended): A system, for supporting a laptop computer, comprising:

a first end cap including:

a first platform portion adapted to support a first portion of the laptop computer, the first platform being generally arranged in a first plane;

a sidewall structure having:

a first inner wall connected with said first platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said first platform portion;

a first outer wall forming an acute angle relative to an axis perpendicular to said first plane and surrounding the periphery of said first inner wall;

at least one first spring system connected between said first inner wall and said first outer wall, each of said at least one first spring system including at least one bellow bellows; and

at least one first rib protruding from said first outer wall; and

a second end cap including:

a second platform portion adapted to support a second portion of the laptop computer, the second platform being generally arranged in a second plane;

wherein the at least one first rib and the at least one second rib have a face substantially perpendicular to one of the first and second planes.

25. (Withdrawn): The system of claim 23, further comprising:

at least one first bulbous structure formed on the first platform portion; and

at least one second bulbous structure formed on the second platform portion.

26. (Withdrawn): A system for supporting a plurality of integrated circuits held one or more trays, comprising:

a first end cap including:

a first platform portion adapted to support a first portion of the one or more trays;

a sidewall structure having:

a first inner wall connected with said first platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said first platform portion;

a first outer wall forming an acute angle relative to said first platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said first inner wall;

at least one first spring system connected between said first inner wall and said first outer wall, each of said at least one first spring system including at least one bellow; and

at least one first rib protruding from said first outer wall; and

a second end cap including:

a second platform portion adapted to support a second portion of the one or more trays;

a sidewall structure having:

a second inner wall connected with said second platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said second platform portion;

a second outer wall forming an acute angle relative to said second platform portion and surrounding the periphery of said second inner wall;

at least one second spring system connected between said second inner wall and said second outer wall, each of said at least one second spring system including at least one bellow; and

at least one second rib protruding from said second outer wall.

27. (Withdrawn): The system of claim 26, wherein each of the at least one first rib and the at least one second rib has an outer face substantially perpendicular to a plane formed by one of the first and second platform portions.

28. (Withdrawn): The system of claim 26, further comprising:

at least one first bulbous structure formed on the first platform portion; and

at least one second bulbous structure formed on the second platform portion.

29. (Currently Amended): A unitary spring system end cap for use in retaining and protecting at least one fragile item within a carton including at least a first surface and a second surface extending from the first surface, the unitary spring system end cap comprising:

a base ~~for resting~~ adapted to rest on or against the first surface of the carton;

a platform adapted to support at least a portion of the at least one item;

a sidewall structure that suspends said platform above said base, said sidewall structure including an inner wall and an outer wall, said inner wall connected with the platform, and said outer wall extending from said base;

wherein said outer wall extends from said base such that[,] when the unitary spring system end cap is disposed within the carton an acute angle is formed between said outer wall and the second surface of the carton and such that a gap exists between the second surface of the carton and said outer wall; and

a rib projecting outward from said outer wall such that when the unitary spring system end cap is disposed within the carton, at least a portion of the rib projecting projects a distance that varies with the gap such so that said portion is adapted to contact generally contacts the second surface of the carton.

30. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 29, further comprising a spring system connected between said inner wall and said outer wall.

31. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 30, wherein when the rib is impacted, the rib can engage said spring system.
32. (Currently Amended): The end cap of claim 30, wherein said sidewall structure includes a plurality of said spring systems formed end to end, wherein each of said plurality of spring system systems is connected with said outer wall along a ridge forming a plurality of arcs connected end to end along the length of said sidewall structure.
33. (Currently Amended): The end cap of claim 29, wherein said rib includes a contact surface, the contact surface being generally parallel to the second plane surface when the unitary spring system end cap is disposed within the carton.
34. (Currently Amended): The end cap of claim 29 30, wherein said rib is approximately centered along said spring system.
35. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 33, wherein said contact surface has an approximately trapezoidal shape.
36. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 33, wherein said contact surface has an approximately rectangular shape.
37. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 3, wherein said rib is approximately centered along said spring system.
38. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 3, wherein said contact surface has an approximately trapezoidal shape.
39. (Previously Added): The end cap of claim 3, wherein said contact surface has an approximately rectangular.